

REMARKS

The claims now pending in the application are Claims 1 to 7 and 25 to 31, the independent claims being Claims 1 and 25. Claims 8 to 24 previously were withdrawn from consideration and cancelled pursuant to a restriction requirement. Claims 1 and 25 have been amended herein.

In the Official Action dated May 22, 2003, Claims 1 to 7 and 25 to 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,835,133 (Moreton). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection respectfully are requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The rejection of the claims over the cited art respectfully is traversed. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejection, independent Claims 1 and 25 have been amended herein more clearly to recite various novel features of the present invention, with particular attention to the Examiner's comments. Support for the proposed amendments may be found in the original application. No new matter has been added.

The present invention relates to a novel camera and image pickup method. In one aspect, as now recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention relates to a camera in which plural image pickup means pick up plural images of an object, respectively. Display means displays images picked up by the plural pickup means and recording means records the picked up images on a recording medium. Memory means is arranged both as a buffer of the display means for displaying the images picked up by the plural image pickup means, and as a buffer of the recording means for generating a recording signal from the images picked up by the plurality of image pickup means.

In a similar aspect, as now recited in independent Claim 25, the present invention relates to a method for image pickup by a camera, in which plural images of an object are picked up with plural image pickup means, respectively. Images picked up by the plural image pickup means are displayed on a screen of a display unit, and are recorded on a recording medium. A storing step uses a memory both as a buffer in the display step for displaying the images picked up in the image pickup step, and as a buffer in the recording step for generating a recording signal from the plurality of images picked up by the plurality of image pickup means in the image pickup step.

In each aspect, a memory is used both as a buffer of display means for displaying the picked-up images, and as a buffer of recording means for generating a recording signal from the plurality of images picked up by the plurality of image pickup means.

For example, as illustrated in Fig. 3, and as disclosed in the corresponding text, a camera of the present invention uses a memory 40-43 both for generating display image data from picked-up image signals to display it on a liquid crystal display and for generating compressed image data from the picked-up image signal to record it onto a separate recording medium. These different uses of the memory are controlled in accordance with an operation mode.

Applicants submit that the prior art fails to anticipate the present invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that there are differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art, such that the subject matter taken as a whole would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

The Moreton '133 patent relates to an optical system for a single camera stereo video, and discloses in Figs. 8A to 8C a reproduction system of a stereo image which includes a double buffer memory (300a, 300b, 310a and 310b in Figs. 8A to 8B or 720 in Fig. 8C) to store right and left images of frames. However, Applicants submit that the Moreton '133 patent fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-discussed features of the present invention. Rather, the Moreton '133 patent is understood merely to teach controlling reading and writing with a double buffer memory by controlling reading and writing pointers (Column 12, lines 58 to 67). Nowhere is the Moreton '133 patent understood to disclose or suggest to use the double buffer memory both as a buffer of display means and also as a buffer of recording means for generating a recording signal from the plurality of images picked up by a plurality of image pickup means, as disclosed and claimed in the present application.

In this regard, in the Official Action the Examiner refers to Fig. 8C of the Moreton '133 patent and states that the features of the memory means are readable on reading out video data from a double buffer 720 to be displayed and writing video data into the buffer 720 *itself* under the control of a controller 730. Applicants submit that the latter function (writing) is distinguished from using the memory means as buffer of recording means for generating a recording signal, as recited in the amended independent Claims 1 and 25.

For the above reasons, Applicants submit that independent Claims 1 and 25 are allowable over the cited art.

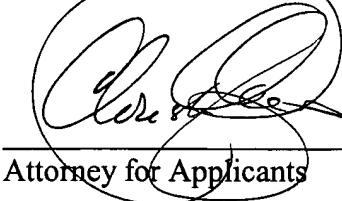
Claims 2 to 7 and 26 to 31 depend from Claims 1 and 25, respectively, and are believed allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, each of these dependent claims recites additional features in combination with the features of independent Claims 1 and 25, and is believed allowable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims respectfully is requested.

Applicants request that the present Amendment be entered under 37 CFR § 1.116. Applicants submit that the present amendments merely are minor or formal in nature, and reduce the number of issues for consideration. Applicants believe the present Amendment was necessitated by the outstanding Official Action, and submit that the present amendments were not previously made because Applicants believe the prior claims are allowable.

Applicants believe that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action, and submit that the application is in allowable form. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the present application at the Examiner's earliest convenience earnestly are solicited.

Applicants' attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Michael Clegg". The signature is enclosed in a large, roughly circular oval.

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